

Community Briefing

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 3

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2007



Words from Chief Hall

The men and women of the Westminster Police Department would like to wish you and your families a happy and safe holiday season. We will be working diligently to keep crime at bay during the months ahead, including extra officers in our bustling shopping districts. You may notice officers on the roof of the mall, surveilling the parking lot, or extra patrol cars in the area. Rest assured that all is well. These measures are being taken to prevent crime and ensure your safety. As always, thank you for your tremendous support and feel free to contact me if we can improve our level of service in any way.

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The memorial will stand as a sign of the department's memory of and appreciation for these fallen officers and will reaffirm the Westminster Police Department's commitment to community service.

Memorial Unveiling

On the evening of Thursday, August 30, 2007, the Westminster Police Officers' Association unveiled the long anticipated police memorial. The Westminster Police Department lost two treasured police officers within 7-months of each other. This memorial project has been completed to honor: Lieutenant Ron Weber, who on June 6th 2003, succumbed to cancer. The illness was attributed to the years Lieutenant Weber spent investigating dangerous and toxic methamphetamine labs. And Officer Steven Phillips, who on January 29th 2004, lost his life as a result of an on-duty motorcycle collision. These officers were both highly respected and well-loved.

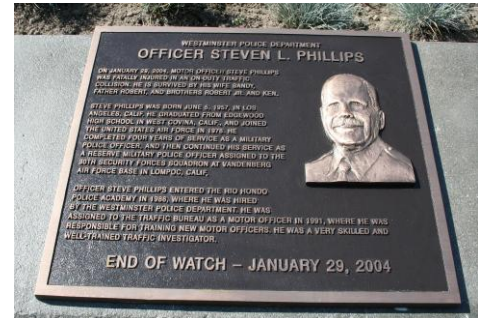
The Westminster Police Officers' Association came to the easy decision that these officers should be shown special dignity and respect by erecting a memorial in their honor.

We were honored to have City employees, their families; local law enforcement and fire authority, community members and friends attend this very special event.

We truly believe this project has been a team effort between our Association, the Mayor and City Council, City employees, and the community and we are very thankful for the support we have received.



Plaques at the
Memorial site
for WPD fallen
officers.



Safety Day at Sigler Park



West County SWAT Team

On Thursday, July 26, 2007, local children and their families braved the sweltering heat to attend this year's annual Public Awareness Safety Day at Sigler Park. People filled the park by the hundreds where police officers, firemen, and other safety personnel for the City of Westminster were available to answer questions from the community.



Mock Pursuit



The most anticipated demonstration was one involving **West County SWAT Team** members bounding out of a helicopter following a mock vehicle pursuit.



Fingerprinting

Animal Control joined the event this year and provided dog leashes and information brochures.

Several people took the opportunity to license their bicycles, and this event also gave parents the chance to have their children fingerprinted by the Westminster Forensics Technicians and CSI Explorers.



Getting friendly with the SWAT Team

A number of people saw this event as an opportunity to get up close to **SWAT Team** members (represented by police officers from Westminster, Los Alamitos and Cypress; paramedics from the Orange County Fire Authority; Crisis Negotiators; and Tactical Dispatchers).

Relay for Life

The American Cancer Society Relay for Life is held to remember those we have lost to cancer, to support all those who are battling the disease, and to work towards the day that no one has to hear the words – “you have cancer.”



On behalf of the American Cancer Society Relay for Life Westminster, I want to thank those of you who participated (whether through donations and/or coming out to the event and walking or being on the committee) in this year's Relay. This Relay hosted the most survivors to participate in Westminster's opening ceremony (over 40 survivors) and 23 teams (there were 12 last year) and over 500 luminaria's to remember cancer victims and honor the cancer survivors.

*The goal for this year's Relay was to raise \$37,000.00 (\$32,000.00 was raised last year). I am please to say the preliminary totals, not taking into account for expenses, has breached the **\$50,000.00** mark.*

This year, the WPOA again sponsored two teams; OLD BLUE 47 WALKING CREW, consisting of the veteran employees and the 47 ROOKIE FOOT BEAT consisting of the younger employees. A friendly competition was established between the two teams, since the rookies haven't beaten the vets in any athletic competition, maybe fund raising would be their forte? NOT. The Old Blue 47 Walking Crew treaded over the Rookie Foot Beat in this competition too, raising over 2 times the funds; older and wiser still beats slicker and quicker! Ultimately, the event was a success. 96% of the funds raised at the event will go to patient services, advocacy and research.

Thank you doesn't seem to be enough words to express the gratitude Diane and I have for the support the WPOA and its members giving to the Relay for Life. We look forward to another Relay next year and hope the WPOA support remains with the American Cancer Society.

*Al and Diane Brackett
Co-Chair and Chairperson
RELAY FOR LIFE*



In 2005, the Westminster Police Department received a two-year DUI grant **W.I.D.E** (Westminster Impaired Driver Enforcement). The focus of the program is to combat driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, by arresting drunk drivers and educating the public on the dangers of driving under the influence.

Since October 2005, the Westminster Police Department has arrested **over 900** DUI Drivers.

Retirements



Ken Edwards

After 14 years of service to the City of Westminster, **Police Service Officer Kenneth Edwards** retired from the Police Department on July 1, 2007.

When Ken initially started working as a PSO, his assignment was as a jailer. After working as a jailer, Ken was assigned to the Administrative Services Bureau (ASB). In ASB, Ken successfully conducted the Citizen's Academy for many years. He also conducted parking hearings during this time.

Prior to being a PSO for the Police Department, Ken was a police officer for the City of Long Beach. Upon leaving LBPD, Ken ran his own tile business. In fact, Ken did tiling work for many WPD employees over the years.

With his retirement from WPD, Ken will be spending his time enjoying camping, fishing and traveling with his wife.



Jim Mraz

After more than of 24 years of service to the City of Westminster, **Detective James Mraz** retired from the Police Department on August 3, 2007. Jim started working for WPD as a Student Aid, and in 1982 he became a Police Recruit and the rest, as they say, is history.

His career with the Police Department covered many diverse areas including the TARGET Gang Unit. He was an excellent gang investigator, was well gifted with his ability to speak with gang members and their family members and at consoling victims. He was the first in the unit to use power point for gang prosecution and search warrant briefings.

Jim was presented with a placard in appreciation for his excellent investigative work, dedication to solving crimes, and commitment to assisting and protecting the public.

Employee of the Month

AUGUST OFFICERS OF THE MONTH:

Officer Timothy Walker Officer Cameron Knauerhaze

On 07/28/07 a robbery series involving a male suspect was discussed during briefing. Detectives prepared a composite sketch of the robbery suspect and distributed information flyers during briefings. Using this information, Officer Walker made contact with a subject on 16th St, west of Beach. The subject admitted his parole status and gang association. Officer Walker obtained a consent photo of the subject and completed a full Field Investigation. Detectives later used Officer Walker's information for a photo line-up which resulted in the subject being identified in several of the robberies. The subject was eventually arrested and admitted his involvement in the robberies.

Great investigative skills and attention to detail by Officer Walker led to the successful arrest of a subject wanted in a series of robberies with minimal evidence or leads.

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On 08/14/07, Officer Knauerhaze was working patrol when he noticed a suspicious vehicle which matched the description of a suspect vehicle involved in a gang shooting on Homer St. Officer Knauerhaze conducted a traffic stop of the vehicle. Subsequent investigation found bullet holes in the side of the vehicle. Ultimately, the driver was identified as a member of the Townsend Street Gang. He was interviewed by Detectives and admitted his role in the Homer shooting. The suspect is now in jail.

**Officer Knauerhaze's attention to detail and thorough investigation resulted in the driver being charged with a felony and the recovery of evidence.**

### AUGUST EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH:

#### **Dispatcher Nicholas Lewis Dispatcher Roxanne Morales Dispatcher Cheryl Valle**

On 08/16/07, Dispatchers Lewis and Morales were the only two dispatchers working during the stabbing call on St. Andrews. Many Officers commented on how impressed they were with both Dispatchers during the incident. Radio traffic was extremely busy. There was a search going on at the crime scene as well as felony car stops taking place at two separate locations. Dispatcher Morales was working primary radio position. She handled non-stop radio traffic on both channels. Dispatcher Lewis assisted Dispatcher Morales with the heavy amount of radio traffic while handling the influx of field requests and incoming calls.

On 08/19/07, Dispatchers Valle and Lewis were the only two dispatchers working during the shooting that originated at the International Billiards. This was essentially a situation with numerous agencies assisting. This incident was extremely chaotic due to the number of shooting scenes being reported to dispatch, witnesses running from the area on foot and in vehicles, and the large amount of field units working this incident. Dispatcher Valle remained calm and focused while handling the radio. Units were working on multiple radio channels. Dispatcher Lewis handled the influx of phone calls from witnesses and other agencies. He also handled the high volume of field requests and assisted Dispatcher Valle with radio traffic.

Dispatchers Lewis, Valle and Morales are to be commended on their excellent teamwork and ability to handle such a high volume of activity with accuracy and professionalism.

**A JOB WELL DONE BY ALL!**

### *Employee of the Month (Continued)*

#### **SEPTEMBER OFFICERS OF THE MONTH: Officer Anthony Donner**

On 09/26/07 at approximately 0053 hours, Officer Thompson took a robbery report which occurred on Brookhurst St. The victim was robbed by two men, one of which was armed with a sawed-off shotgun. At 0320 hours, the manager called in two suspicious subjects that matched the description of the robbery suspects. Officer Donner arrived first and encountered the two at the south driveway. One of the suspects was holding the shotgun. Officer Donner ordered both suspects down to the ground but the armed suspect fled. The other suspect was also attempting to flee, but Officer Donner's command presence kept the suspect at bay. Officer Donner gave clear and concise transmissions as to the fleeing suspect's direction of travel, description, clothing and info on the shotgun. Upon the first follow-up unit to arrive, Officer Donner was found using his unit for cover, giving verbal commands to the prone suspect while holding him at gunpoint and maintaining observations in the direction of travel of the armed suspect.

Officer Donner remained calm and professional. For Officer Donner to handle such a hot call as well as he did, with the short amount of time he has on, was extremely impressive.

**Excellent job Officer Donner!**

### **Police Academy Graduation**

On August 23, 2007, another group of community oriented leaders graduated from the Rio Hondo College Training Program. The ceremony was held at the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium where members of area law enforcement community, family and friends of graduates attended the ceremony.

**WE CONGRATULATE THE GRADUATES AND  
WISH THEM GREAT SUCCESS IN THE  
FUTURE!**



*Graduates with Chief Hall following the ceremony*



## New Faces

*The WPD family welcomed Officers Sean Ly, Willie Hamer and Daniel Flynn. The three new officers recently graduated from the Rio Hondo College Training Program and were sworn in by Chief Hall in front of family and friends during a ceremony on August 28, 2007.*



Sean Ly – Police Officer

Sean Ly was born in Vietnam, moved to the U.S. with family, and grew up in the Inland Empire. Sean is married and has no children. Sean previously worked for Express Jet/Continental Express as a flight attendant along with helping run his parent's garment business. Sean also speaks Vietnamese.



Willie Hamer – Police Officer

Willie Hamer was born and raised in Memphis, Tennessee and moved to Southern CA 3 years ago. Willie is married and has three children, one of which is a new born 1-2 months old. Willie has a Bachelor's Degree of Business Administration from LeMoyne-Owen College in Memphis, Tennessee.



Daniel Flynn – Police Officer

Daniel Flynn was born and raised in Southern Ca. Buena Park / La Palma area. Daniel is married and has no children. Prior to enrolling in the police academy Daniel served 4 years in the U.S. Army. Daniel served mostly in Germany and rose to the rank of Sergeant.

**Please join us in welcoming the new officers to our Westminister Police Department family.**

## CITIZEN ACADEMY

The Westminster Police Department is in search of participants for **the next Citizen Academy slated for January 8, 2008**. Participants have the opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge of the problems, policies and laws that officers deal with on a daily basis.

Weekly Topics Include:

Criminal Law  
Domestic Violence  
Gangs and Specialized Enforcement  
Investigative Procedures  
Laws of Arrest  
Narcotics Enforcement  
Officer Safety  
Use of Force  
SWAT  
Driving Under the Influence (DUI)  
Sex Crimes  
Forensic Service  
Animal Control

Participants will also have the opportunity to go on a ride along with an on duty officer. This allows participants to witness, directly, how things are really done on the streets.

The academy meets once weekly for ten weeks. Meetings include informational lectures, demonstrations, group discussions, and hands on activities from actual police training.

**If you are interested in attending the next Citizen Academy please contact the Administrative Services Bureau at 714-898-3315 Ext 590.**



## Leash Law

Like most communities, Westminster does have leash laws. All dogs must be on a leash no longer than six feet in length, and in the hands of a person capable of controlling the dog, when on any/all public property. The dog cannot be on any private property unless the dog's owner has permission from the property owner.

The rationale for having leash laws is for the safety of the dog, other animals, and the public.

Unrestrained dogs might run into traffic, become involved in a dog fight, chase a pedestrian or bicyclist, jump on a small child or elderly person, or become involved in a dog bite. **Leashed dogs are less likely to injure a person or another animal because they are under the control of their handler.**

Violators can be given either a verbal warning or a Municipal Code citation from a Police Officer or Animal Control Officer.



## Police Department Phone Numbers

General Information Ext.425  
Dispatch Ext. 326  
Records Bureau Ext. 371  
Traffic Division Ext. 339  
Administration Ext. 301  
Animal Control Ext. 365